



# Nebraska Weather and Crops

USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service

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**Agricultural Summary:** For the month of December 2005, producers began the month battling the impact of the late November snowstorm. This, coupled with sub-zero temperatures during the first portion of the month, made livestock care difficult. Producers were assessing wind damage to a large number of pivots in central and northern counties. Above normal temperatures during the second half of the month melted snow cover and reduced livestock stress. The warmer conditions allowed grazing of stalk fields to resume, limiting livestock forage needs. A large portion of the state is either abnormally dry or experiencing moderate drought conditions.

This release is based on data from FSA county directors, county extension educators, NOAA, and the High Plains Regional Climate Center. County comments and reports can be found at:

[http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics\\_by\\_State/Nebraska/Publications/Crop\\_Progress\\_&\\_Condition/index](http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/Nebraska/Publications/Crop_Progress_&_Condition/index)

For those receiving an e-mail text version of this publication, a complete version including crop progress charts and precipitation maps can also be found at the above address.

**Weather Summary:** Depth of snow at the end of December was zero across most of the state, with only the Central and North Central Districts reporting totals greater than two-tenths of an inch. Precipitation during December was light with the most falling on the eastern half of the state. Temperatures averaged well below normal the first full week but temperatures at the end of the month were well above normal. During the last week of the month, soil temperatures averaged more than 3 degrees above normal.

**Field Crops Report:** **Wheat** condition remained near month ago levels and rated 1 percent very poor, 4 poor, 31 fair, 61 good, and 3 excellent. This is identical to last year's condition of 64 percent good or excellent and well above two years ago. **Hay and forage** supplies rated as adequate or surplus across the vast majority of the state.

**Livestock, Pasture, and Range Report:** **Cattle and Calves** condition rated 1 percent poor, 11 fair, 75 good and 13 excellent, near year ago levels.

**The following are comments from Nebraska's FSA County Executive Directors and County Extension Educators:**

### ***NORTH CENTRAL***

HOLT/BOYD: We are using more hay than we have for several years but the supply is good so it isn't a big problem at this time. We have also received more moisture in November and December than for several years.

### ***NORTHEAST***

ANTELOPE: With warmer than normal temperatures, cattle are in mud all the time since it does not freeze at night.

DAKOTA: A long cold snap stressed livestock in this area. Corn stalks have been accessible most of the season, with only a little supplemental feeding going on.

DIXON: Bitter cold weather earlier in the month created stressful livestock with some death loss. However, the second half of December has been mild making conditions tolerable.

KNOX: Cattle are being moved back to stalks. Much of the early snow cover has melted and cattle are again utilizing stalks.

THURSTON: Snow and cold temperatures during the early part of December required cow-calf owners to start feeding hay and other supplemental forage. However, by the middle of the month, the snow had melted and cattle could again glean the corn and soybean fields.

### ***CENTRAL***

DAWSON: Most of the snow from December has disappeared.

WASHINGTON: Very muddy.

YORK: All snow on the farm ground has melted. Not much moisture soaked into the soil as ground is frozen pretty deep.

### ***EAST***

DODGE: Mild weather has helped with the livestock situation. It has been damp all week with light rain showers.

### ***SOUTHWEST***

FRONTIER: The snow has finally melted and the wheat looks good. Temperatures have returned to mild and the livestock are doing well.

### ***SOUTH CENTRAL***

KEARNEY/FRANKLIN: Late November and early December snow storms caused significant weight loss on cows and calves. Most snow has melted and wheat looks very good.

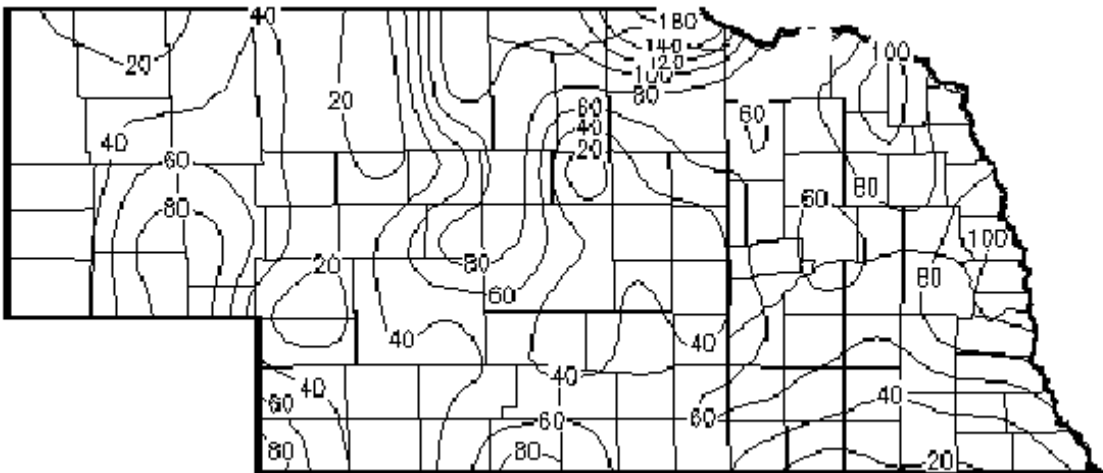
WEBSTER: We continue to be dry in the area; some parts worse than others.

### ***SOUTHEAST***

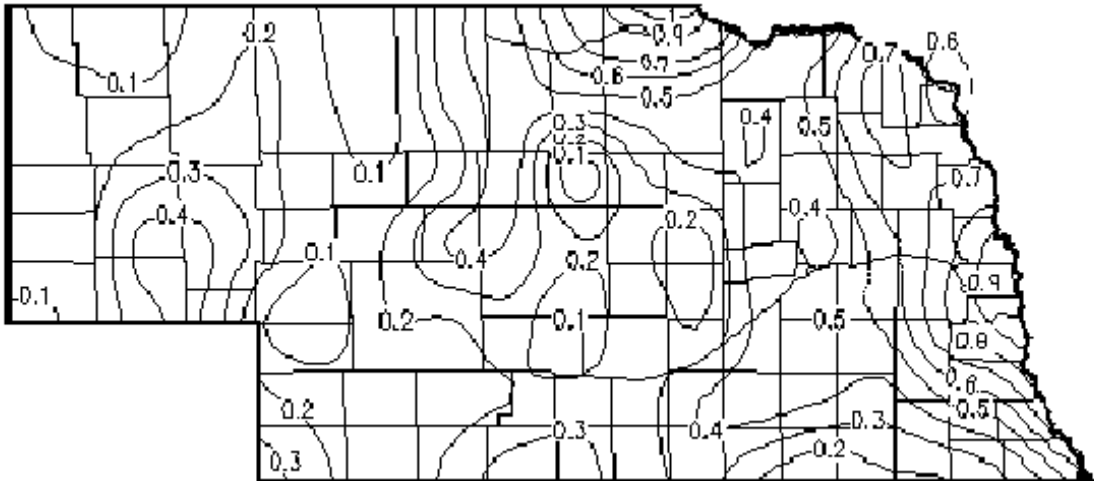
JOHNSON: So far, a mild winter has not caused ranchers to exhaust their hay and forage supplies; most cattle are still on stocks.

NEMAHA: Temperatures have been above normal the past couple of weeks and stalk fields are open so this should help reduce the hay needs and also improve the condition of cows.

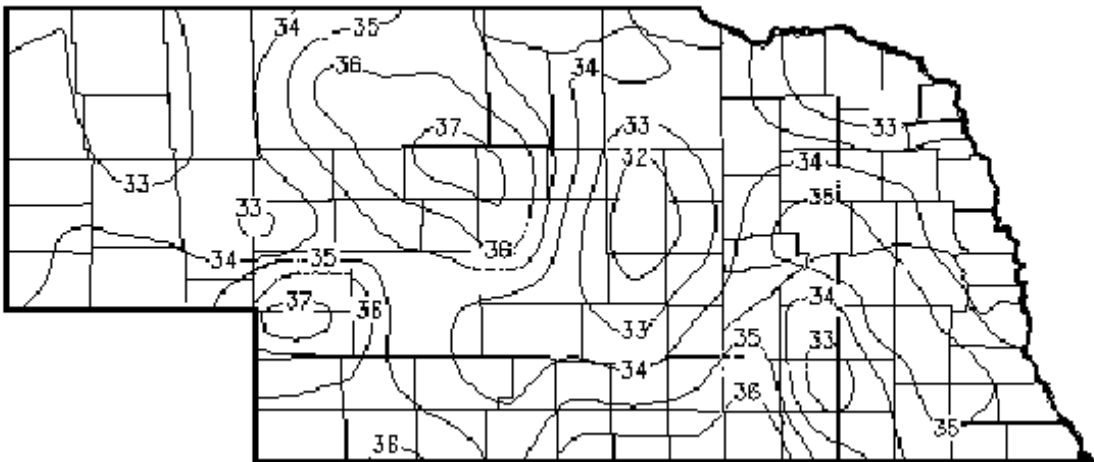
PRECIPITATION AS PERCENT OF NORMAL FOR DECEMBER 2005<sup>1</sup>



PRECIPITATION IN INCHES FOR MONTH OF DECEMBER 2005<sup>1</sup>



SEVEN DAY AVERAGE TEMPERATURE AT THE FOUR INCH DEPTH UNDER BARE SOIL  
DECEMBER 26, 2005 - JANUARY 1, 2006<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Source: High Plains Regional Climate Center and Nebraska State Climate Office